Analekara
A Carnatic Geetham By Purandara Dasa

Aibhilin inghean Daibhidh
040186BR
Division I: Music/Vocal Performance
Vijayanagara Empire, Southwestern India
1525
Setting: Court/Religious/Temple
Analekara by Purandara Dasa is a piece of Carnatic music from the early 16th century. The piece originated in Southern India in the Vijayanagara Empire. It is a piece of religious/praise music and one of 475,000 compositions by Purandara Dasa. Analekara was one of the first pieces written by Purandara Dasa when he began composing music in the 1500s and is a warning to not waste one's life without knowledge of the religious scriptures.

Purandara Dasa is known as the “father” of Carnatic music. Carnatic music is a classical form of music originating in southern India. All carnatic music is composed in a specific tālam (rhythm pattern) using a ragam (scale) composed of swaras (notes). When performed, both the swara and the sahityam (lyrics) are sung, as well as improvised sections known as Manodharma sangita.

Analekara is a geetham (song) is composed in KannaDa, a language of Dravidian origin located in the modern Karnataka area, historically known as the Vijayanagara Empire. KannaDa was influenced heavily by Sanskrit, another language Purandara Dasa commonly composed it.

The geetham will be performed as a courtly lady studying with Purandara Dasa and be performed in a traditional style, sitting crossed legged and beating the tālam on the thigh. The geetham is accompanied by a drone, commonly played on the Tambura. The clothing is sari and jewelry appropriate for a woman from the Vijayanagara Empire.
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Carnatic Music

Carnatic music originated as a classical form of music in Southern India using the languages of KannaDa, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu, and MalayaaLam (karnATik). It can be both vocal and instrument or sometimes purely instrumental. Carnatic music emphasis the melody and relies on a theory system that seems complex to Western eyes initially, but has some similarities. The important elements are Swara (the note), Ragam (the scale) and Talam (the beat).

Swara
A swara is a note used in Carnatic music. Unlike traditional western music which is written in a staff where the note as written is fixed and always sounds the same, the swaras are not fixed and changed based on the desired pitch of performers. The Swara system is similar to the Western system of Solflege (Do-re-mi) using the concept of moveable Do. The swaras are Shadjamam (Sa), Rishabam (Ri), Gaandaaram (Ga), Madyamam (Ma), Pancamam (Pa), Daivatam (Da), and Nishaadam (Ni). A full 'major scale' would be Sa, Ri, Ga, Ma, Pa, Da, Ni. Using “Middle C” as “Sa” the scale would look like:

\[
\begin{align*}
C &= Sa \\
D &= Ri \\
E &= Ga \\
F &= Ma \\
G &= Pa \\
A &= Da \\
B &= Sa
\end{align*}
\]

Sa and as the tonic of the scale and Pa as the 5th will always represent these notes (for a given Sa pitch) with no variation. For other notes, there are 2 or 3 types designated by number which produce a full 12 note 'chromatic' scale. However, some notes overlap. A full 'chromatic' scale with all 12 notes would be S, R1, R2/G1, R3/G2, G3, M1, M2, P, D1, D2/N1, D3/N2, N3. Notes that overlap will not occur in the same raga (scale) one after another. For an example using “Sa” as “middle C”, see below.

\[
\begin{align*}
C &= S \\
C\# &= R1 \\
D &= R2/G1 \\
D\# &= R3/G2 \\
E &= G3 \\
F &= M1 \\
F\# &= M2 \\
G &= P \\
G\# &= D1 \\
A &= D2/N1 \\
A\# &= D3/N2 \\
B &= N3
\end{align*}
\]

Ragam
A ragam is a scale formed by set of swaras. There are 72 major ragas, but others can exist and are used in compositions as well. Ragas combine swaras in ascending and descending order like a western scale. However, not all Ragas require 7 notes. Some ragas use 7 notes ascending and 7 notes descending. Others use less notes ascending and descending. Still others vary the order of notes. As stated before, a
note that overlaps, such as R2 and G1 will not occur in the same scale next to each other. However, this
does not rule out them occurring in the same scale, as long as they are not two successive notes.

**Talam**
The Talam is the beat or rhythm cycle of the music (similar to the time signature in western music, only
each “measures” is divided into multiple sections). The talam will never speed up or slow down,
however, rarely it may change within a composition (karnATik). There are 7 basic talas. Each Tala can
be subdivided angams (components). The components are Laghu, Dhruta and Anu Dhruta. There are 3
additional angams, but they are not used in the basic Talas (Subramanian). A Tala may consist of all 3
angams, or a a selection of any combination of the 3 angams (from 1 to 3), and angams may repeat.
The Laghu angam can be divided into 5 Jathris. The Talas can then also be subdivied by 5 Gathis
(speed) called Nadais. In Classical Carnatic Music, there are a total of 175 Talas (Balaji).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7 Basic Talas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dhruva Tala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Laghu</td>
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<td>1 Dhruta</td>
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<td>2 Laghus</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 Jathris</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tisra</td>
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<td>Chatusra</td>
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<tr>
<td>Khandha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misra</td>
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<td>Sankeerna</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*The 5 Gathis/Nadais have the same names as the Jathris.

Talas are named by knowing the 3 componets: The Basic Tala, the Jathri, and the Nadais. The names
are listed in order of **Jathri – Tala - Nadai** (For Example: Misra **Jathi** Matya **Tala** Tisra **Nadai**)

**Keeping the Talam Beat**
The Talam beat is kept by a specific combination of hand finger movements (called kriyaa) against the
upper thigh while seated in cross legged (Indian) style. The type of movement used is based on the
Angams. Beats of the Laghu are kept using the palm and fingers. Beats of the Dhruta are kept using the
palm and back of the hand. Beats of the Anu Dhruta are kept using just the hand. Dhruta beats simple
beat the palm of the hand on the thigh with odd beats and the back of the hand against the thigh with
even beats. Anu Dhruta simply beat the hand against the thigh for each beat. Laghu is slightly more
complicated. For example, for Chatusra Jathi (4 counts) you would do the following movements
(karnATik):

- Beat 1 – Tap palm of hand on thigh
- Beat 2 – Tap pinky finger against thigh
- Beat 3 – Tap ring finger against thigh
- Beat 4 – Tap middle finger against thigh
Notation
Carnatic music in period, like many historical music traditions, was not written down. The notation provided here follows conventions developed outside of period but which are used to record period words that were previous only oral collections. Modern Carnatic music notation relies on the swara system. Most music available online is presented in a similar fashion. Each piece lists a ragam and a Talam. The swaras that make up the ragam are also listed in the ascending (arohanam) and descending (avarohanam) order. Swara are listed using the full designation (such as R2 or M1) in the ragam listing, however, in the notation they numerals are dropped and they are listed by either the first letter, or the swara syllable name. The collective term for the swaras as they make up the composition is In the music, the swaras are arranged into Talas. Talas are separated into angams using vertical slashes (|) and Talas are separated from each other by double vertical slashes (||). The length of the note is indicated by hash marks or other fillers such as periods and commas, depending on the source.

The sahtiyam (words or lyrics) associated with each swara are listed below the swara and also separated into Talas by the vertical slash marks. Music from other sources, or using alphabets other than English, will follow the same general rules with Talams separated by slashes, a line showing the Swara, and a line showing the sahityam, though some notations may differ from the numeric system. For example, some notation does not use the number system of designating the chromatic scale and instead uses adjusted syllable names (such as Gu or Ru instead of Ga1/2 and Ri1/2). As the most common internet sources (karnATik, Kalyanaraman) use the numeric system, it is the system described (Subrananuanm).

Example Talam from Analekara (Triputa Talam Thisra Jathi):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lagha</th>
<th>Dhruta</th>
<th>Dhruta</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>R</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A - na | le - | ka ra  |

<--- Talam with Swara
<--- Talam with sahityam

Elements and Techniques
There are many elements which define Carnatic music and techniques for singing that are important in the performance of Carnatic music. A few techniques are defined here that are often used when researching and discussing Carnatic music (Ayyar).

Manodharma sangita
Effectively “imaginative music”. These are the improvised aspects of Carnatic music not part of the kalpita sangita (the composed music) (Ayyar).

Raga Alapana
The alapana introduces the raga of a given piece of music. It is divided into three sections: akshipthika, ragavardhini, and makarini. Akshipthika is the introduction to the framework of the raga. Ragavardhini is the major section of the alapana which elaborates the raga and focuses on each note of the raga one at a time. The final section, makarini is the conclusion often signified by fast passages (brigas) within the raga. Alapans are often sung on syllables such as tadarina or tadana but are also sung using ‘ah’ to allow for resconance and akAram (Ayyar).
akAram
akAram is, effectively, open throated singing (Narasimha). The purpose is to have clear, resonating notes. It is often used during ‘ah’ sections of alapana and geetam.

Kalpana swara
Kalpana swara is the presentation of the raga using only the swara. This can be done around a single line or the piece can be presented using the swara before adding the sahityam. Only the swara syllables that are part of the ragam can be sung as part of kalpana swara (Ayyar).

Instruments
There are a few instruments traditional used in the performance of Carnatic music. The first is the tambura. The tambura is a long necked string instrument similar to a lute with no frets which plays an important role in the performance of Carnatic music. Carnatic music is sung to a drone, which is a continues sound on the Sa and Pa swaras of the raga. The tambura is generally tuned to Pa, Sa, Sa, Sa with the middle two Sa's an octave higher than the final. The strings are plucked and resonate for up to 10 seconds, depending on the tuning. While distinct notes sound as they are plucked, the overall feeling is of a continuous Sa/Pa sound. The tambura is the instrument which traditional plays the drone. Other instruments include the percussion instrument known as the Mridhangam, which is often used to beat the Talam. String instruments such as the violin and the veena, the instrument favored by Saraswathi, the Goddess of learning and the Arts, are also common for use as melodic instruments. Below are the Tambura, Mridhangam, and Veena respectively (Instruments in Carnatic Music).
Purandara Dasa

Purandara Dasa was born in 1484 in Southern India. The exact location of his birth is a subject of disagreement, some say it was the small village of Pandarpur, others the town of Kshemapura in the Karnataka state. He was well educated and, in 1500, at the age of 16, he married Lakshmibai. He worked in his family's business as a moneylender and it is said that he lived only to earn money.

The accepted story of how he became a carnatic musician involves a religious incident. A brahmin visited his shop asking for charity, and when Purandara Dasa would not have any charity, the brahmin went to his wife. His wife wanted to help the brahmin, and the brahmin suggested that she give him something she received from her parents, as it would be hers to give without the permission of her husband. The wife gave the brahmin a piece of jewelry given to her by her parents. The brahmin then returned to Purandara Dasa's shop to pledge something for a loan. The brahmin showed Purandara Dasa the jewelry received from his wife and Purandara Dasa took it and locked it away. He went to his wife and demanded to see the jewelry. His wife knew she would be punished for giving away the jewelry and decided to drink poison. As she was about to drink the poison, the jewelry appeared in the cup. She showed the ornament to Purandara Dasa and, when he saw the box where he had locked the ornament was empty, asked his wife to tell him the truth of what had happened. This lead Purandara Dasa to believe that the Brahmin was God. He was disgusted with himself and gave away his wealth and began to travel the Vijayanagara Empire composing versus and songs.

Purandara Dasa composed in both Kannada and Sanskrit. One of his earliest pieces was Analekara, which is a warning not to waste one's life away. He became a disciple of Vyasa Raayaa in 1525 and was titled Purandara VitThala. He wrote 475,000 songs before he died in 1564 (one year before the fall of the Vijayanagar Empire) and is considered the father of Carnatic music. Most of his songs praise Krishna, but other gods and goddesses such as Ganesha and Saraswathi were occasionally praised as well.
Analekara

Analekara is a Geetham, which is a simple song with limited ornamentation or repetition.

Ragam: Suddha Saveri
Arohanam: S R2 M1 P D2 S
Avarohanam: S D2 P M1 R2 S

This ragam uses the same swara both ascending and descending.

Using middle C as Sa, the notes of this Raga are as follows (with how they are pronounced when singing the Swara)

| S | = | C | = | Sa |
| R2 | = | D | = | Ri |
| M1 | = | F | = | Ma |
| P | = | G | = | Pa |
| D2 | = | A | = | Da |

This geetham is in Triputa Talam Tisra Jathi.

There are 3 sections to each Talam: 1 Laghu (in Tisra Jathi, which means 3 counts) followed by 2 Dhruta (2 counts per Dhruta)

Format of each Talam:

X X X | X X | X X ||

Sahityam (lyrics):

Aanalekara Unni Poladi Sakala Shaastrapuraana
Dheenam Taala Dheenam Taala Parigathu Rere
Setu Vaaha Pariga Tamnam Jataajoota

Translation of the Sahityam:

Even as we watch, the water stored in a tank leaks through another outlet. In the same manner, my life has been wasted without the awareness of the ancient texts and scriptures (Kalyanaraman)
Analekara Notation

```
R M R | R S | D S || S , S | D P | M P ||
A - na | le - | ka ra || un - ni | po - | la di ||

D D S | D , | D P || P M R | D D | D P ||
sa ka la | sha - | sthra pu || ra - na | di - | nam - ||

P , P | D D | D P || P , P | M P | D P ||
tha - la | di - | nam - || tha - la | pa ri | ga thu ||

P M R | S R | S R || P M P | S R | S R ||
re - re | a - | - - | a - - | a - | - - ||

P P D | P P | M R || R S R | M , | M , ||
a - - | a - - | - - || se - thu | va - | ha - ||

D P D | S , | S , || R R S | D P | M P ||
pa ri ga | tham- | nam - || ja ta - | ju - | - ta ||

D D S | D , | D P || P M R | D D | D P ||
sa ka la | sha - | sthra pu || ra - na | di - | nam - ||

P , P | D D | D P || P , P | M P | D P ||
Tha - la | di - | nam - || tha - la | pa ri | ga thu ||

P M R | S R | S R || P M P | S R | S R ||
re - re | a - | - - | a - - | a - | a - ||

P P D | P P | M R || R S R | M , | M , ||
a - - | a - - | - - || se - thu | va - | ha - ||

D P D | S , | S , ||
pa ri ga | tham - | nam - ||
Analekara in Modern Western Notation

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Ri} & \quad \text{Sa} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Sa} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Ri} \nonumber \\
\text{Da} & \quad \text{Sa} & \quad \text{Sa} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Sa} \nonumber \\
\text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} \nonumber \\
\text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} \nonumber \\
\text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} \nonumber \\
\text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} \nonumber \\
\text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} \nonumber \\
\text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} \nonumber \\
\text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Ma} & \quad \text{Pa} & \quad \text{Sa} \nonumber \\
\end{align*}
\]
Kannada

Kannada is a language spoken in southwestern region of India modernly known as Karnataka and historically known as the Vijayanagara Empire. It belongs to the Dravidian language family and is closely related to Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. The variant of Kannada spoken from approximately 1150 AD to 1700 AD is known as Medieval Kannada/Middle Kannada or naDugannaDa. During this time period, Kannada was influenced by Sanskrit and is a transitional period between Old Kannada and Modern Kannada. Below is an overview of the Kannada alphabet and phonetic pronunciations.

Vowels (From Omniglot)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kannada</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
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Vowel diacritics

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</table>

Consonants (from Omniglot)

Conjunct Consonants (from Omniglot)
**Performance**

**Women in Vijayanagara**

While there is no express evidence (that I have found) that states “women performed Carnatic music,” based on the information available the conclusion can be drawn that, even if it is not expressly documented, it is not outside of the realm of activities women in the Vijayanagara Empire participated in. There are multiple sources available that state women were adept at music and participated in many activities otherwise “considered the monopoly of men, such as administration, business and trade, and involvement in the fine arts” (New World). Kamat of the Mysore Department of Archeology states “Women musicians were expert in playing on flute, vina (=lute), and drum (=maddale), beating on bronze tala (kamsala) and blowing horn (=kahale).” Women composers of religious music in India have existed since at least the 7th Century when a women named Andal composed hymns celebrating Krishna. In the 13th century, Akka Mahadevi sang religious songs called Vachanas and wrote free verse lyrics and poems. While out of period, Princess Rukmini Bai Tamburatti composed religious songs in the 18th Century, as well. Finally, biographies of Purandara Dasa's life suggest that his wife and children also composed verses and songs with him and, while not expressly stated, it would be reasonable to assume that where they were composing, they were also performing the music they composed (karnATik). With a history showing that women have continued to compose and perform religious music over a period of over 1000 years, coupled with the knowledge that women were expert musicians in the Vijayanagara Empire and enjoyed many traditionally male activities, it is valid to consider that women would have been involved in the performance and proliferation of Carnatic music in the early 16th Century.

**Costuming**

Women during this time period either went topless or wore a blouse, either plain, embroidered, or otherwise decorated and sari (Kamat). While there is limited pictorial evidence to support wearing a Choli, the option of topless is generally considered less than socially acceptable to our modern society (both medieval and mundane) and thus with Choli type tops being a dominant upper garment throughout various regions of India, it is reasonable to assume that this would be an appropriate substitute for topless as an upper garment. A sari wrap similar to the fishtail wrap was worn (see picture below from Sivaramamurthi). At with all Indian cultures, jewelry was important with bangles worn at
the wrists, pearl necklaces hanging from close to the neck all the way to the belly button, large earrings, anklets, armbands, and pearled headdress at the part of the hair ending on the forehead called a tilaka (or tika), which was a mark of religious worship or devotion, was worn (Dasa). Additional jewelry was also worn, though images indicated that it was not necessary to wear all these elements all the time.

**Learning the Piece**

Before learning the geetham, I spent time learning the theory behind Carnatic music. I could not understand the swara without researching and studying it first. Once I was able to understand the theory, I was able to start learning the piece.

I learned the piece from the swara notation. The western music transcription was provided for the reference of others. While I did determine which notes equated to the swara by converting them to western notes, I learned the pitches by playing them on the flute and, primarily, by listening to recordings. In period, the piece would have been learned from a guru (teacher) or by listening to another musician. Thus, I listened to multiple recordings such as those available on Kalyanaraman's website which includes recordings sung in multiple keys as well as an online 'class' specifically addressing the geetham. Additionally, I listened to an excellent recording from the Sarva Sree Foundation which promotes Carnatic music world wide.

I did my best to emulate the recordings. Since Analekara is a geetham and they are considered the easier pieces and more simple pieces to learn (children learning Carnatic music are able to perform geethams and they are some of the first pieces learned by all students), there were not as many advanced vocal techniques necessary for performance. Since the swara notation does not specify a given pitch or key like western music does, it is up to the performer to choose the pitch. I chose the starting pitch for “Sa” that was most comfortable to my voice.

The geetham is performed at a variety of tempos, though most are relatively moderate with each swara somewhere between 100 and 120 beats per minute. I again chose a tempo within this range that allowed me to clearly express the notes and limited techniques necessary for the piece. From reading various articles about Carnatic music, I gathered that clarity would be more important than speed.

Finally, most of the geetham is straightforward. The performers in most recordings give very little additional vocal ornamentation other than the 'bounce' associated with repeated notes and some minor vocal pitch variations. The akAram ('ah') section is sung with as much clarity and 'open throated'-ness as I was able to manage without the extensive training of Carnatic performers.

**Performance Style**

For the performance I decided to perform as a female and will be wearing Sari and jewelry as appropriate for an urban woman of the Vijayanagara empire. The performance will be for a courtly audience, but it would be performed to a general audience in a similar way. Many performers, such as Purandara Dasa, sang as minstrels or on street corners to praise Krishna and the other gods and goddesses, thus, the music itself is appropriate for both public place and more private place such as at a court or in a temple as a song of individual worship rather than one of sharing.
I will be seated in the traditional cross legged (Indian) style so that the Talam can be properly beat against the thigh. The tambura drone will begin. Due to the expense of buying an instrument, the tambura drone used will be a recording of a tambura (Peikoff). First, the Alapana is sung. This will be a simple iteration of the ragam both arohanam and avarohanam mostly to establish the swara which compose the ragam. It will be sung at a slow tempo followed by a faster tempo, and then finishing using akAram on the ‘ah’ syllable. Then, the geetham is sung through using the swara. After the swara has been sung, the sahityam will be sung. Traditionally, geethas have little embellishment or repetition of the entire piece or segments of the piece, however, the first line of the geetham is often sung again at the end to finish the geetham. In most recordings I listened to, the first line of this particular geetham was not repeated, thus I decided to omit the repetition and end with the final words of the sahityam.
Thoughts and Analysis

In general, I have tried to be as true to form in the performance of the piece as possible. However, there are some limitations to my performance for a few reasons. A major limitation is the technique. There are many techniques used in singing Carnatic music such as ‘bounces’ on the beat, waverings and trills, and many vocal techniques that, without extensive training, are difficult to duplicate. This is one reason I chose a geetham rather than a more complicated piece due to the general simplicity compared to other pieces. In the geetham, there are less vocal techniques required to successfully sing the piece.

Additionally, a true performance would have live instruments to accompany the singing. While some performances may not have had an extensive range of instruments, it is likely they would still have some type of instrument to provide a drone. I was able to use a recording as the drone, but it would add depth to the performance to have a tambura or other instrument live in accompaniment. However, with the idea that a person singing in praise in public or on a street corner, it is reasonable to assume the music is was sung without the drone altogether. I opted to use the drone recording as I felt it added depth and ambiance to the performance as a whole.

A major issue I have had throughout the process is the problem of primary documentation. During this time period, the music was not written down. It was an oral tradition of praise and there are no records from period available. Music was passed on from guru to student, and I assume, through the general population learning a ‘popular’ piece. In choosing a piece, I started with a composer. I chose Purandara Dasa due to his prolific production of music in period as well as his role as the “father” of carnatic music. I also chose a song that I have found attributed to him by many sources. While there is always the chance that the current form of the music has been altered, with such an important personage it is reasonable to assume that Carnatic musicians wished to maintain the integrity of the piece as much as possible out of respect for Purandara Dasa and his contributions to music and religion as a whole.

A final issue is the difficulty of finding good online sources on Carnatic music. There are a few sites that give information, however, it is difficult to learn the complex structure and system of Carnatic music from the resources available due to the traditional method of a student learning from a guru. There are many terms thrown around without adequate information, often sending me through a trail of websites to decipher one meaning. Some of what I determined may, in the long run, be incorrect, but it was the best I was able to reason based on the sources at hand. Finding clear information available without the personal guru relation contact was challenging. I was, however, able to find several recordings of classes which walked students through a variety of geethams which was helpful!
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